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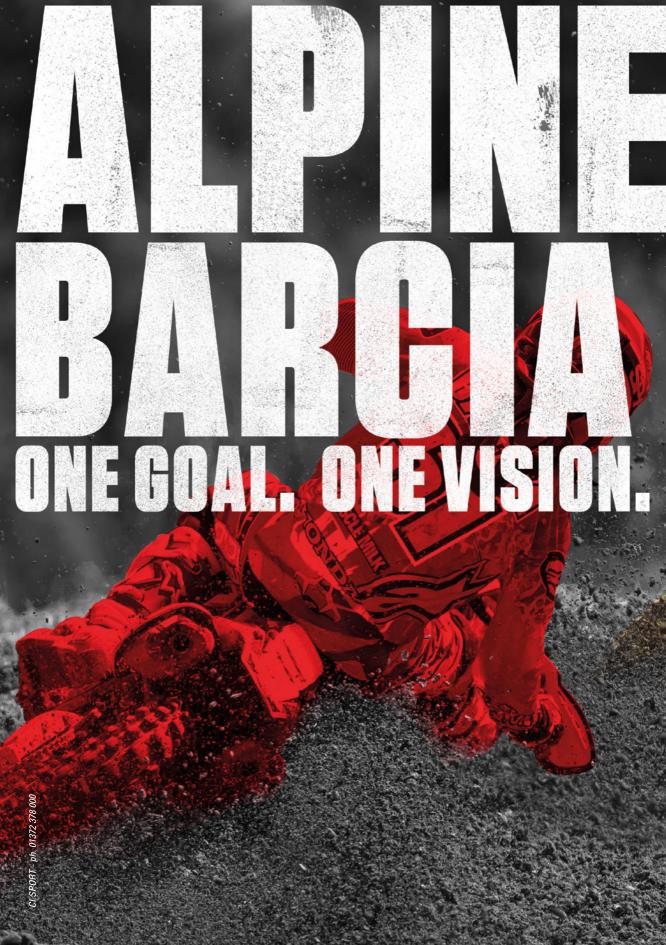
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IMAGES RAY ARCHER DAVIDE MESSORA AND JUAN PABLO ACEVEDO

When the best Motocross riders in the World head to Doha, Qatar in around two weeks time for the opening round of the FIM World Motocross Championships you can expect the whole World to sit up and await the results. In a sport that has grown to mammoth proportions the opening round of the FIM World Motocross Championships is as big as it gets.

The 2014 MXGP class will see many different teams involved, all with a goal. Some will want Championships, others Grand Prix victories and many will be happy to have as much success as possible under their budget restraints.

For the riders involved it must be a good feeling knowing that you have the support of these teams, a much stronger base for everyone involved. Several major factory teams are involved in the MXGP class in 2014. Those being Team HCR, Monster Energy Kawasaki Racing Team, Yamaha Factory Racing, TM Ricci Racing, Team CLS Kawasaki Monster Energy MXGP, Red Bull KTM Factory Team, Red Bull IceOne Husqvarna Factory team, and Rockstar Energy Suzuki World MXGP.

It is these teams that will be wanting their riders to be contenders and names like Antonio Cairoli, Clement Desalle, Ken De Dycker, Gautier Paulin and Tyla Rattray are on the top of the list as possible GP winners and title contenders.

Defending World MXGP Champion Antonio Cairoli knows it isn't going to be easy to defend his title. Not only does the Italian need to battle old rivals, but now with Husqvarna back on



the scene the job gets that little bit harder.

"The first two rounds in Qatar and Thailand these races were a lot of run and we had some good races, it is nice to move there for the first rounds because it is better weather and it is nice to be away from the winter season and I really enjoyed these races.

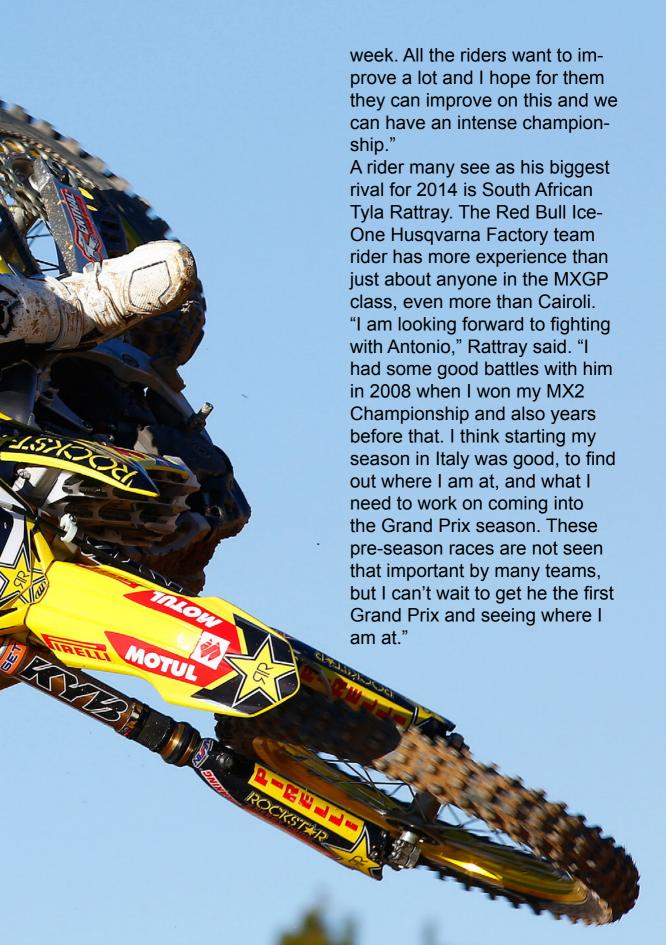
"I am really consistent every year, last year I made some mistakes and missed the podium and this year my goal is to be on the podium every single week. All the riders want to improve a lot and I hope for them they can improve on this and we can have an intense championship."

"It is big news to have Husq-varna in the KTM family. I think it is a good thing we have a bigger family, and I am excited to race them. Also to have more team-mates, although they are not really my team-mates, but the boss is the same. It is nice to have more color in the MXGP. I am really consistent every year, last year I made some mistakes and missed the podium and this year my goal is to be on the podium every single











LET THE SHOW BEGIN

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LUKE STYKE

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Story NIKKI LEIGH SCOTT Photos BAVO SWIJGERS

Every season see's the rise of a dark horse. And while it's never good to count your chickens before they hatch, if you ask anyone 'down-under' they're going to say Australian Luke Styke will be 'THAT' guy.

After absolutely dominating the 2013 Australian Lites Championship (Australia's equivalent to MX2) where he won an outstanding nine of the ten rounds, Styke packed his bags and headed off to Europe with the hope of getting his feet wet and inking a deal for 2014. After spending a couple weeks in Belgium testing with a couple of highly acclaimed GP teams and hanging out with fellow Aussie and MX2 front-runner Dean Ferris, Luke Styke proved he had the speed, guts and determination to

make it to the top in MX2. Upon arrival back in Australia, Styke learned that Belgian based 'Kemea Yamaha Racing' team had taken notice and wanted to sign him. Without batting an eye-lid, Styke jumped at the opportunity to race the 2014 FIM Motocross MX2 World Championship and made the plan to finish out his contract in Australia and then head back to Europe for bike and suspension testing. Meanwhile, going into the final months of 2013.





at the moment. But that's OK, we Styke known to his fans as 'Stykesy', decided to pack up and head for had to race the Australian Supercross Spain. So I'm in Spain right now for Championship for his Australian team a week. It's so cool, the tracks down 'Serco Yamaha'. While the timing here are much better and we are was less than ideal with being fit and healthy for his world championship making more and more progress campaign taking priority, Styke lined every day! Q: What do you think is the hardest up without any expectation, "I never thing to adjust to? looked at myself as a 'Supercross' A: For sure the language and also guy, I just wanted to go out there and the cold weather but it's going to not risk getting injured" Styke said, but like any racer, when the gates get better the longer I'm here. Q: You're pretty much a dropped there's only one thing on his dark horse this year, mind. Winning. Which is just what he how do you feel about did, squeezing out American Gavin Faith to take home his first Australian Lites Supercross Championship. Now, just one month into the New Year, Styke has left the sweltering heat of Australia and touched down in Europe where he intends to set up shop for the next eight months. He has already been out smashing laps in the gnarly dunes of Lommel and the fact that it is almost 40°c colder in Belgium than it is in Jarvis Bay, Australia, will never be enough to freeze his dreams of joining Jeff Liesk, Chad Reed, Andrew McFarlane and Dean Ferris on the list of Australians to have won FIM Motocross Grand Prix. Q: What influenced the move to Europe? A: I feel that it was the next step in my career as I won everything last vear, both Aussie motocross and supercross titles. So I feel like its time to race better guys and better myself. Q: How are you finding the lifestyle over here? Are you settling in OK? A: No! It's cold! (Laughs) Overall it's been ok. My only problem is that the

weather in Belgium is not so good





your ability and I feel comfortable on the bike, matching the pace won't be a problem.

- You dominated the Australian Lites Championship last year; this year MX2 will be on a whole other level. What are your expectations?
- A: I honestly feel that I can be top 5 or even challenge for podiums, so of coarse, that is my goal. If I'm healthy

- O: Do you think the way a rider trains has a big effect on their results?
- work has and always will get results. I definitely think a structured program is the key to good results, I know I can account a lot of my success to it. Right now, it's a little bit difficult to have a strict structured program, as life in Europe is different and everything is new to me. But you know, everyday get's better and the more days that go by, the more I feel I am getting back into the swing of things.
- Q: What's your training program like?
- A: My program at the moment is great.

VAMAHA



and bike is good I believe I can achieve it.

- Q: What are your thoughts on the flyaway GP's?
- A: I reckon it's a great idea. It's definitely a chance to gain more experience and to get an idea of what motocross is like in other areas of the world.
- Q: In Qatar you will be racing at night..

 A: Yeah that's awesome, it kind of reminds me of supercross back home. Because I've done that, I'm used to racing at night, so I reckon it will be fun!

I have been with my trainer Bernie McNeil for 3 years now and my results have only have got better since. I am pumped that he is here in Europe with me now to get me ready.

- Q: Do you have a long-term plan, like move to MXGP next year?
- A: I haven't really thought about it. I am just focusing on this season, I want to get good results and prove what I am capable of. I guess how this season goes will affect my decisions at the end of the year.

Thanks Luke, good-luck for this year! No worries mate and thanks!







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Monster Energy/Pro Circuit/Kawasaki's Justin Hill won the first Western Regional 250SX Class Main Event of his career and became the fourth different rider to win a race this year in the division. **BTO Sports KTM's Andrew Short** led the field through turn one to start the 450SX Class Main Event to grab the Nuclear Cowboyz Holeshot Award®. Short was passed on the opening lap by Monster Energy Kawasaki's Ryan Villopoto with Stewart in tow. Stewart then moved around Villopoto on the same lap.

At the end of the first lap, Discount Tire Racing/TwoTwo Motorsports' Chad Reed pulled into third place. Reed was passed on Lap 7 by Red Bull KTM's Ken Roczen. Out front, Villopoto pressured Stewart throughout the 20-lap Main Event but was never close enough to attempt a pass. It was the 46th-career victory for Stewart and his first since Atlanta last season, 15 races ago. "It is always special to win, but especially this season," said Stewart. "Tonight was our military-themed race and everyone here was one big family. This was an amazing race and I look forward to heading to Cowboys Stadium (in Arlington, Texas) next weekend."

On the last lap of the race, Reed

collided with Roczen's rear tire and crashed while attempting to make a pass for third. As a result, Reed did not finish the race. Villopoto finished second, with Roczen in third.

Team Tedder/Monster Energy/Kawasaki's Dakota Tedder won the first Nuclear Cowboyz Holeshot Award of his career to begin the 15-lap 250SX Class Main Event but was quickly passed by Monster Energy/Pro Circuit/Kawasaki's Dean Wilson, who won last weekend at Angel Stadium. Troy Lee Designs/MAVTV Honda's Malcolm Stewart moved into second place and Wilson's teammate Hill followed in third place. On the second lap, Wilson crashed and dropped outside of the top 10. Just prior to the crash, Hill was able to pass Stewart for second and then assumed the lead. By Lap 6, Rockstar Energy Racing's Jason Anderson, who came into the evening tied for the points lead, passed Stewart for second place. Hill led the remain ing laps for the win, while Anderson finished second and Stewart finished third. Wilson re-entered the race to finish 21st. "What an amazing feeling to get a win," said Hill. "I had a lot more

confidence after getting on the

podium in Oakland and I was able to stay focused. I was so focused



I missed the white flag, so when I got the checkered I kept charging thinking there was one more lap. This is just so awesome." Anderson took over sole possession of the points lead and now holds a four-point advantage over Troy Lee Designs/Lucas Oil Honda's Cole Seely.

Monster Energy Supercross heads to Arlington, Texas' Cowboys Stadium next Saturday, February 15. Next weekend, the Eastern Regional 250SX Class Championship begins as the Western Regional 250SX Class riders are on a break until April 5 at Houston's Reliant Stadium.

250SX Class Season Standings

Jason Anderson, Rio Rancho, N.M., KTM, 131
Cole Seely, Lake Elsinore, Calif., Honda, 127
Justin Hill, Yoncalla, Ore., Kawasaki, 107
Dean Wilson, Wesley Chapel, Fla., Kawasaki, 98
Cooper Webb, Newport, N.C., Yamaha, 92
Malcolm Stewart, Haines City, Fla., Honda, 89
Jessy Nelson, Paso Robles, Calif., Honda, 76
Shane McElrath, Chesterfield, S.C., Honda, 71
Zach Osborne, Chesterfield, S.C., Honda, 69
Dean Ferris, Murrieta, Calif., KTM, 63

450SX Class Season Standings

Ryan Villopoto, Poulsbo, Wash., Kawasaki, 126 Ken Roczen, Murrieta, Calif., KTM, 117 Chad Reed, Dade City, Fla., Kawasaki, 111 James Stewart, Haines City, Fla., Suzuki, 105 Justin Brayton, Cornelius, N.C., Yamaha, 98 Ryan Dungey, Belle Plaine, Minn., KTM, 94 Justin Barcia, Pinetta, Fla., Honda, 89 Andrew Short, Smithville, Texas, KTM, 72 Weston Peick, Wildomar, Calif., Suzuki, 53 Wil Hahn, Menifee, Calif., Honda, 52





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table on the track. I worked a lot on my starts too, because they were my weak point last year. I hope it improves but I will let you know on March 1 if I did it right!' Bavo Swijger image









MOTOGROSS

Don't be surprised to see Todd Waters on the podium a few times in 2014. The latest Aussie onto the GP scene has high hopes and many in OZ feel he has the potential to make his way to the very top. Juan Pablo Acevedo image





MOTOCROSS

Rockstar Suzuki rider Clement Desalle has been the one guy to give Antonio Cairoli a lot of problems in the past, but is yet to win Belgium a World Motocross Championship. Will it happen in 2014, or is it too late. Ray Archer image





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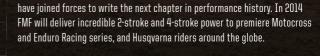
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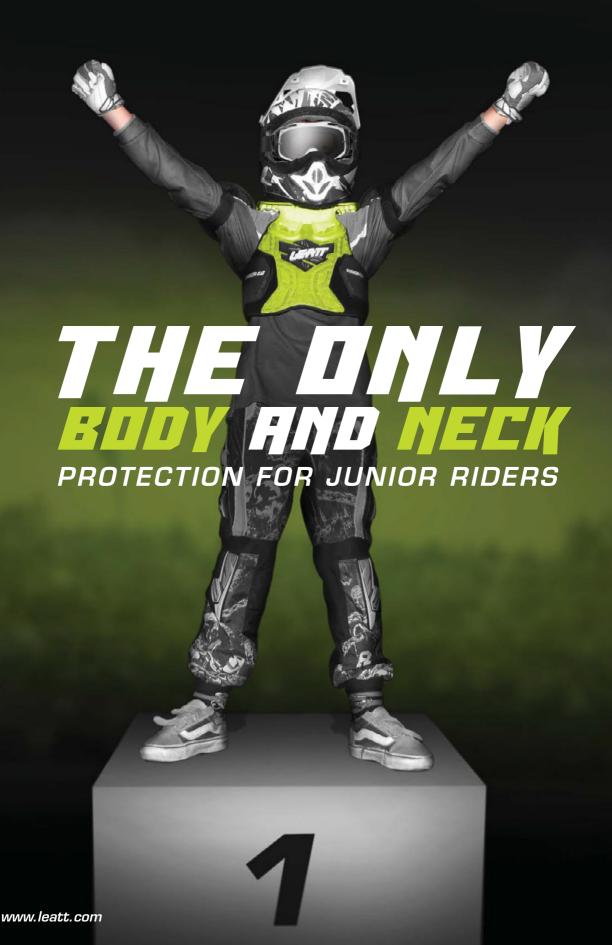
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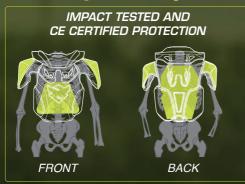
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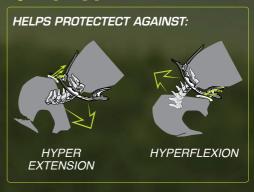




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HUSKY IS BACK AND SO IS RATTRAY

STORY GEOFF MEYER IMAGES JUAN PABLO ACEVEDO

When it was known that KTM would be buying the Husqvarna company, many people were excited. A new factory team in the paddock is always a good thing and the development of the Red Bull IceOne Husqvarna Factory team is a big step for the sport in general. One of the most important factors to their success in 2014 will be South African racer Tyla Rattray.







Rattray will be working hard to regain the form that saw him win the 2008 FIM World MX2 Championship. Having raced in America for 5 years and suffering injuries he is now back where he has his best results and nothing can stand in his way. Here are some of his thoughts about the coming season.

MY WORDS TYLA RATTRAY

It is actually good for my family being back in Europe. I can take my family with me in Europe, while in America it's a lot of travelling and it is just a one day event. In Europe it's a whole weekend and we go with the camper and I take the whole family to all the races. I mean I can take my family with me to all the GPs, they will only miss the flyaways in Qatar, Thailand, Brazil and Mexico. In America my wife could only go to like two or three races in the season, so this is going to be fun.

I am looking forward to fighting with Antonio. I had some good battles with him in 2008 when I won my MX2 Championship and also years before that. I think starting my season in Italy was good, to find out where I am at, and what I need to work on coming into the Grand Prix season. These pre-season races are not seen that important by many teams, but I can't wait to get he the first Grand Prix and seeing where I am at.

America was my dream, to go there and race after watching it on television as a kid, I really wanted to go there. I went over probably too late, I was 24 when I went over, but I felt I did ok. You need to go there when

you are young like Roczen did now. Ken was 18 and still young and you need to get there early. I was happy with my results in America, and the standard of living is like South Africa, but I wanted to come back to Europe and finish my career, maybe retire in a couple of years.

My plan is to stay in Europe until I finish racing. I don't know how many years that will be, maybe two, maybe five. I plan to spend the rest of my time here and I have a good relationship with the guys from Ice1 racing and I look forward to racing here. I am looking forward to the season so much. I have never been to many of these countries. The Grand Prix's is about travelling the World and its good for the sport and riders. It is good to sponsor these races and the riders because its Worldwide. I have never been to places like Mexico, Brazil, Thailand or Qatar, so I am excited for that, to see those places. Europe is where I started my professional career and just to be back and meet old friends. The industry here is really friendly, and I am really excited. I can't wait to get the 2014 season started.

I think that would be good to do that (beat KTM). Obviously I have a good relationship with the guys at KTM and also Husky and they have supplied me with a good bike. Antonio will be the tough guy, he will be the guy to beat. My riding is going well, we have everything going well and we need these pre-season races in Italy to race against Antonio, because he is the guy to check your speed against. That is why we are in Italy, to see how we are compared to him.















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STORY GEOFF MEYER IMAGES HONDA

It doesn't take a genious to work out that the FIM World Motocross Championships are seen as a pretty important part of the future plans of the major companies in the sport. First Husqvarna return, and now Honda have shown their intent to push to challenge the Red Bull KTM Factory team as the leading team in the sport. Don't be surprised to see a BIG three way battle in the near future as KTM, Honda and Husqvarna bring our amazing sport to another level.

The newly renamed Team HRC reflects the increased role of the factory in the championship's premier MXGP category, and is the natural culmination of an increasing Honda presence in the sport over the last three years.

This is the latest chapter in a long and successful history in World Motocross, in which Honda have

and successful history in World Motocross, in which Honda have sealed a raft of 125, 250 and 500 MX world titles. It's also a new chapter for HRC, which most recently sealed the FIM MotoGP World Championship title with the Repsol Honda Team last season. The team retains last year's rid-

er line-up of Max Nagl and Evgeny Bobryshev, who will compete aboard works Honda CRF450RW machines.

Nagl and Bobryshev were present for the President's address in Tokyo last week appearing alongside the likes of other works Honda riders Dani Pedrosa and Marc Marquez (MotoGP), Joan Barreda (Dakar) and Honda's drivers from the IndyCar Series and the World Touring Car Championship. The team has been testing in Sardinia in January and competed in the opening round of





team because it was always the best - a step ahead of everyone. Now I'm so happy to be in Team HRC. It's really a dream come true. I can feel the difference to last year because we're working very closely with the factory and the Japanese engineers, we have more parts to test each time, and we've improved the bike a lot already. The experience and success of HRC brings so much to the team. Standing on the stage for the President's motorsport announce ment alongside riders like Pedrosa and Marquez - it really shows the importance of MXGP to Honda this season."

Russian charger Evgeny Bobryshev is super pumped to be involved in this very special moment in World Motocross.

"Representing Team HRC is a big honour for me. There is so much history and many motocross victories in the past, and recent World Championships in MotoGP for example, and now after a break it's a great feeling that HRC is back in MXGP and to be a part of it. The whole team approach is so focused on the results this year, and pre-season testing has been very positive. Working directly with Honda in Japan means that changes are happening faster and we have even more support that has helped us already in taking another step, so I'm feeling strong for this season. I hope we can repeat history."





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CAIROLI AND HERLINGS WORLD CHAMPS!

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Toni Cairoli's fourth successive MX1 world championship title aboard the KTM 350 SX-F was another step for the Italian towards matching the remarkable 10 titles won by legend Stefan Everts. As team boss, Stefan also got to witness Jeffrey Herlings, with 14 GP wins in succession on the KTM 250 SX-F, pulverise another record of his. Just 18 years old, Jeffrey was simply untouchable in winning his second MX championship title.

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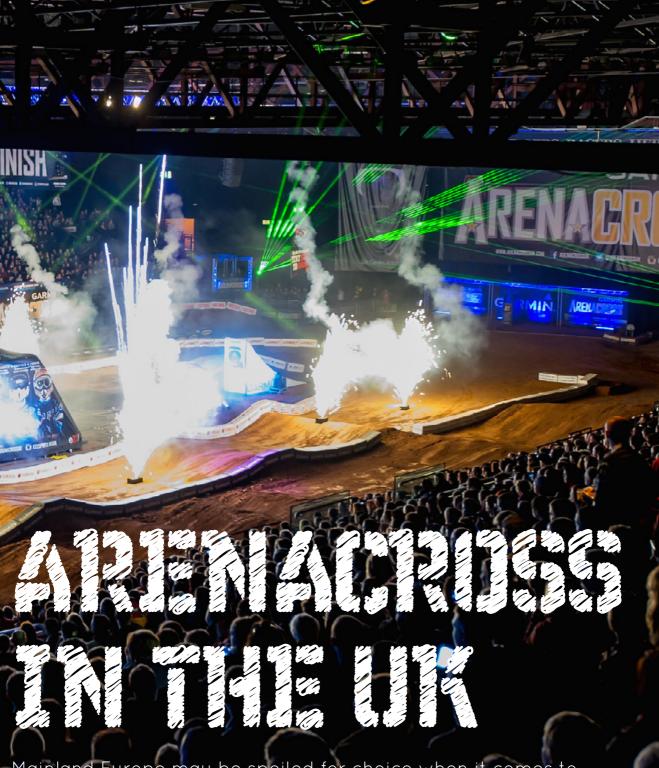












Mainland Europe may be spoiled for choice when it comes to feasting on a meaty portion of indoor bar banging over the winter months but for pretty much the last decade it's been a different story on the other side of the English Channel.

Over in the UK fans have been forced to choke on the veggie version of Supercross – a second-string series relying on entry fees to survive. That's not to say the racers and racing wasn't great but the sheer spectacle of SX – flashing lights, pumping music, gorgeous girls – wasn't there and as a result neither were the crowds.

But that was then and this is now...

In 2013 promoter e22 Sports stepped up with an ambitious four-round Arenacross series which pitted some of the UK's top Pros against a selection of the continent's fastest indoor racers. After chucking in world class Freestyle Motocross and four stacked Youth classes for good measure, the series was a sell-out success - meat was back on the menu!

This year e22 Sports has shifted up a gear, rolling out a seven-round series with races in six major cities. Now just past the halfway stage, the 2014 Garmin Arenacross Tour is packing out arenas and sending the crowds crazy with full-contact racing and insane Freestyle Motocross led by Spanish legend Edgar Torronteras.

The Pro field for 2014 has such strength in depth that no-one is guaranteed a place in the Main Event. After the opening four rounds which kicked off with two





Garmin Arenacross Tour has been seeing who adapts quickest to the tight and technical tracks.

Consistency issues apart, Whatley's obviously a fast learner and in Liverpool we saw two British riders who came into the series with next to no indoor experience on the podium. At 26 Jason Dougan (MVR-D Honda) has been around the block a few times in the Motocross world and looks like he's got his head around Arenacross too.

"I struggled at the first two rounds just to find my feet," admits Jason, "it's something I've never done before so it's a massive learning curve. I managed to get some good starts in Liverpool and stay out of trouble and that worked. So many of the riders here are capable of getting onto the podium it's a case of putting yourself in the right position and I've managed to do that."

If Dougan's found his feet, back-to-back British MX2 champ Elliott Banks-Browne (Buildbase Honda) appears to have it totally dialled! With just one – short-lived – Arenacross appearance to his name in 2013, EBB came into the series as a bit of a dark horse.

A DNF in the first Main Event of the season didn't really tell us much but a third the following night was much more informative. Coming into Liverpool on the back of another DNF in Birmingham, EBB came out swinging and went to war with Izoird. The pair clashed throughout

the race and when Izoird crashed in the dying moments of the Main Event EBB gifted himself a great 24th birthday present!

Watching the race unfold was Buildbase Honda boss Dave Thorpe who summed up his rider's epic victory.

"I'm so pleased for him, I'm so pleased for the team, I'm so pleased for Honda," says the three-time world MX champion. "Arenacross is not really Elliott's thing – he's all about outdoors – but he's come in against some quality French riders and he's worked and he's worked and he's there. This is what we go racing for."

Okay, that's enough about the Brits for now - let's pick up on DT's comment and talk about quality French riders...

Frenchman #1 has to be Fabien Izoird. Stylish, fast and – when he needs to be – tres aggressive, the 26-year-old two-time European SX champ is the series' only double winner so far with back-to-back victories at rounds two and three. A

third in Belfast's opener combined with dominant performances in the Head-to-Head races for bonus points saw him open up a commanding lead until EBB derailed him in Liverpool.

However, he's still six points clear



of the pack with three rounds to run and if he can stay out of trouble – and out of Banks-Browne's way – he surely must be favourite for the title.

Frenchman #2 is Cyrille Coulon (SR75-Molson Suzuki). Returning to Arenacross for the second year after finishing fifth in 2013, the popular Parisian has yet to podium a Main Event this time around but consistent 7-5-4-7 finishes give him third in the championship chase.

Frenchman #3 is Roic Rombaut (Apico LPE Kawasaki). The 25-year-old is making his debut his UK indoor debut this year and despite a disastrous 11th in Liverpool still holds fourth in the title race.

The 2014 Garmin Arenacross Tour is a genuine international competition with racers from 10 different countries present including South African Neville Bradshaw (Putoline Apico Honda). Last year's #2, Nev struggled on a 250F through the first three rounds before trading up to a 450 and immediately coming within one place of a podium finish.

Tyler Villopoto (Oakleaf Kawasaki), baby brother of AMA SX champ Ryan, is also contesting the series but hasn't travelled well and has just a single point to his name.

The same can't be said for Daniel McCoy (MBO Sport ASA Yamaha) who's made the 10,000-mile journey from his home in Australia worthwhile with a string of strong performances. After coming up short of the podium in Northern Ireland the Aussie's carded back-to-back second places that have helped him force his way up to second in the championship and within striking distance of the championship leader.

Round five of the 2014 Garmin Arenacross tour took place on last weekend at the Metro Radio Arena in Newcastle with round six scheduled for February 15 at Sheffield's Motorpoint Arena. There's then a fortnight's break before the series signs on March 1 at Wembley Arena in London.



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